

Sinclair Broadcast Group is now instructing their 62 local stations, many in battleground states, to preempt regular programming to air a Kerry smear piece two weeks before the election. This unprecedented move would be direct electioneering by a corporate media giant -- and against federal election law.

Sinclair is apparently willing to take this risk to their business because this is an election that hangs in the balance. They choose to pursue partisanship rather than a broadcaster's duty to the public or even their own business interests.

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

Thank you.  
Nancy McBeth